

# Effects of Transport on Oral Temperature of Post-Surgical Patient Transported from PACU to Nursing Units

## BACKGROUND

- There is a gap in literature on the effect of **intra-hospital transport** on patient temperature.
- Perioperative hypothermia is defined as a core temperature below 96.8°F (36°C) (ASPAN, 2018).
- Hypothermia is responsible for circulatory, cardiac, pulmonary, neurologic, coagulation, metabolic and immunologic effects on the post-surgical patient.

## LOCAL CONTEXT

- Occasionally, PACU is informed by the floor nurse that the recently transported patient is hypothermic.

## PURPOSE

- Does oral temperature change as a result of transport from PACU to inpatient nursing units?

## REFERENCES

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## METHODS

- Design: IRB approved, correlational study using pre/post measures.
- Sample: **post-surgical adult patients admitted to PACU**, receiving general, regional or monitored anesthesia care (MAC).
- Setting: SJO PACU
- Procedure:
  - Within 2 minutes prior to leaving PACU, oral temperature was taken by data collector/transporter with a designated oral thermometer.
  - Immediately on arrival to nursing unit, the same transporter took another oral temperature (using same oral thermometer) before transfer to bed.
  - Use of warm blanket recorded.



## RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- Sample size = 100 patients.
- Results indicated transport had minimal effect on temperature with <0.1 F degree of decrease in temperature.
- Transport time did not influence temperature.

## FURTHER RESEARCH / IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Consider additional data elements including:
  - Time at 30 minutes prior to transport (care as usual).
  - After transfer from gurney to bed.

## CONCLUSIONS / DISCUSSION

- Prior to this study, there was no standard method of measuring temperature in PACU; temporal, axillary and oral thermometers were used.
- A standardized temperature method is recommended throughout the perioperative phase (ASPAN, 2018).
- Practice was revised to use oral thermometers to provide consistency from pre-operative unit to post-surgical nursing unit.
- This study indicated that transport did not effect patient temperature.